

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 29

RESOLUTION CHAPTER 13

Assembly Joint Resolution No. 29—Relative to senior nutrition services and programs.

[Filed with Secretary of State April 3, 2014.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 29, Brown. Senior nutrition services and programs: funding.

This measure would memorialize the Congress and President of the United States to restore federal funding cuts, due to sequestration, to senior nutrition programs, and to declare senior nutrition services and programs exempt from further budget cuts.

WHEREAS, The United States federal budget reductions, known as sequestration began on March 1, 2013; and

WHEREAS, In 2011, the United States Congress adopted, and President Obama signed, the Budget Control Act of 2011 (P.L. 112-25, hereafter the act), as an intended compromise and incentive to address fundamental federal budgetary policy and direction; and

WHEREAS, Section 302 of the act directed that, if a 10-year deficit reduction plan was not enacted, significant amounts of discretionary federal fiscal year 2013 funds would not be available for spending; and

WHEREAS, As the act mandates, and because Congress failed to pass a bill reducing the federal deficit by \$1.2 trillion, that amount will be automatically sequestered through across-the-board federal budget cuts from mandatory and discretionary spending in the years 2013 to 2021, inclusive, unless Congress takes alternate action; and

WHEREAS, The cuts enacted by the act, initially set to begin on January 1, 2013, were postponed by two months by the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (P.L. 112-240), thereby amplifying the impact of spending reductions starting on March 1, 2013; and

WHEREAS, The act requires that every federal program be cut equally, including programs and services authorized by the Older Americans Act of 1965 and administered by the Administration for Community Living which oversees food and nutrition programs, elder abuse prevention, caregiver support, healthy aging, and employment for low-income seniors isolated due to extreme poverty and disability; and

WHEREAS, Nutrition programs provide important links to other supportive in-home and community-based services, including homemaker-home health aide services, transportation, physical activity programs, home repair, home modification programs, as well as nutrition

screening, assessment, education, and counseling, and special health assessments for diseases including hypertension and diabetes; and

WHEREAS, Home-delivered meal programs provide vital nutrition to homebound individuals, and provide volunteers and paid staff delivering meals an opportunity to check on the welfare of those homebound meal recipients, and to report any health or other problems those volunteers and staff may notice during those visits, which may decrease feelings of isolation among those homebound meal recipients; and

WHEREAS, Congregate nutrition programs provide nutritious meals, nutrition education, and nutrition risk screening, and provide seniors with positive social contact with other seniors; and

WHEREAS, Providing meals to eligible individuals can enhance their ability to remain independent and in their own homes, thus preventing unnecessary, costly, and premature institutionalization; and

WHEREAS, Older Californians are far less likely, due to age and disability, to obtain employment to compensate for lost nutrition and other benefits, forcing their families to back-fill with resources intended to support their children and placing their entire family's well-being at greater risk; and

WHEREAS, State and federal funding reductions result in the loss of equipment, deterioration of distribution systems, and erosion of other innovations created by networks of community organizations, local governmental agencies, and faith communities upon which a vast array of food-insecure Californians rely; and

WHEREAS, According to the California Department of Aging, the sequester cuts will result in federal funds to these home-delivered, congregate nutrition, and nutrition services incentive programs being reduced by approximately an aggregate of \$6.6 million during federal fiscal year 2013–14, and approximately an aggregate of \$5.09 million in each subsequent federal fiscal year, thus depriving thousands of California seniors of vital health and nutrition services; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature memorializes the Congress and President of the United States to restore funding to senior nutrition programs, similar to the way funding was restored for air traffic control services; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature memorializes the Congress and President to declare senior nutrition services and programs exempt from further budget cuts due to the disproportionate growth of the aging population and the corresponding disproportionate impact of the sequester cuts upon that population; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to each Senator and Representative from California in the

Congress of the United States, to the Director of the California Department of Aging, and to the author for appropriate distribution.

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